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## Hovering Immaterially: Halo in Chippendale Green, Central Park Sydney

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Halo, Simon Wood, Photography

[Anuradha Chatterjee, Sydney Correspondent](#)

*Halo* is a new public art designed as part of the Chippendale Green within Central Park, Sydney's new 'downtown' destination. It is designed by artists Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford, in collaboration with specialist engineers, designers and fabricators lead by Jeremy Sparks of Partridge Event Engineering, and commissioned by Frasers Property Australia and Sekisui House Australia, the developers for Central Park. The work, notes Turpin, is an 'extraordinary integration of art, science, and engineering acting in collaboration with the natural environment' ([source](#)). *Halo* consists of a yellow ring (12 meters in diameter) attached to a sliver arm (6 meters long), aligned off centre and placed on top of a 13 metre high pole. Made of carbon fibre, the entire weight of the ring and the arm balances on a tiny ceramic bearing the size of a small glass marble. The ring moves with changing direction and gusts of wind. The artistic expression is indebted to the history of the site and the old brewery. Crawford notes that the 'beautiful circular supports for the enormous old brewing vats inspired *Halo*'s form and a desire to reference



the tipsy effects of beer resulted in the ring's precarious balance and off-centred tipping and turning' ([source](#)).

Halo Opening, 14 August 2012, Photo: Anuradha Chatterjee

*Halo* is interesting because whilst the concept is meaningful and its execution minimal and precise, it does nothing except demonstrate kinetic motion, but in doing little, it achieves a lot. Public art by its very nature is spatial, and its experiential dimension provides the programming of the public space it is placed within or against. *Halo* is placed at the end of the sloping path (and cascading water feature) that leads down to the Chippendale Green,

designed by Danish landscape architect Jeppe Aagaard Andersen with Turf Design. *Halo* forms an imperceptible canopy connected to the trunk and firmly rooted to the ground. It provides also a scalar element to the space, which would otherwise be lost amidst the towers under construction. Like a canopy, it is ever present, seemingly protective, and moving with the breeze. It materializes the immaterial element, wind. It also frames the sky – not just as the figure of nature (cloudscapes) but also as the figure of the urban, through the framing of the rising towers around the Green.

Harriet F. Senie argues that ‘the best time to write about public art is not when it is first installed but after it has ‘settled in’’, which would make this review a bit early ([source](#)). However, the public viewing of *Halo* on the 25 August 2012 (the Green formally opens in December 2012) demonstrated an enthusiastic public occupation. Installing a ‘fragile’ environment and artefact (*Halo* and the Chippendale Green) within its harsher surrounds (construction of the towers) is perhaps an ironic but a sensible move. This way, the public art and the space will, I suspect, invite emotional and associational investments from the public, allowing it to become a part of local memory and identity. *Halo* provides an interpretation of the site and its history in its form but at the same time it provides an aperture and a conduit for the appreciation of the urban environment, and the reason to inhabit the surrounds. No doubt this will be assisted by the return of the posters that tell the story of *Halo*’s design and construction. Already, for me anyway, daily glimpses of *Halo* from Broadway provide another kind of orientation, towards the new future for Chippendale, and the inner city.

Two short films about *Halo* can be viewed [here](#) and [here](#).

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